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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/824,404	04/15/2004	Rainer Knapp	KNAPP3	7685
1444	7590	08/25/2005	EXAMINER	
BROWDY AND NEIMARK, P.L.L.C.				BURCH, MELODY M
624 NINTH STREET, NW				
SUITE 300				
WASHINGTON, DC 20001-5303				
				ART UNIT
				PAPER NUMBER
				3683

DATE MAILED: 08/25/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

HC

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/824,404 Examiner Melody M. Burch	KNAPP ET AL. Art Unit 3683

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 June 2005.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-29 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-29 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 4373707 to Molders in view of US Patent 3089391 to Raleigh.

Re: claims 1-29. Molders shows in figure 1 an adjustable length spring, comprising a casing 12 which has a central longitudinal axis and is filled with a pressure fluid; a guide and seal unit 16,18 which closes the casing at a first end thereof; a piston rod 22 which has an outer end and is extended through, and sealed towards the guide and seal unit out of the first end of the casing; a piston 24 which is guided in, and sealed towards the casing and connected with the piston rod; a first sectional casing chamber 26 which is formed between the piston and the guide and seal unit, a second sectional casing chamber 28 which is defined by the piston and faces away from the first sectional casing chamber, a valve 36,34 which is disposed in a vicinity of the piston for interconnection of the sectional casing chambers, the valve having a valve pin 36, which is displaceable along the central longitudinal axis, for actuation of the valve from outside the casing as shown; and at least one element shown radially outside of the end of the lead line of 38, which is disposed between the piston and the first end of the casing,

which encircles the piston rod as shown, which supports itself on a side opposite the guide and seal unit, and which counteracts any extension of the piston rod for at least part of a length of extension.

Molders fails to disclose the limitation of the element being a spring element that springly counteracts any extension.

Raleigh teach in figure 2 the limitation of a spring element 43 that springly counteracts any extension of the piston rod connected to element 40.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the element of Molders to have included a spring element, in view of the teachings of Raleigh, in order to resiliently counteract extension of the piston rod to improve ride "feel" and prevent harsh impacts.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Melody M. Burch whose telephone number is 571-272-7114. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (6:30 AM-3:00 PM).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Charles A. Marmor can be reached on 571-272-7095. The fax phone

number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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August 22, 2005

Melody M. Bruch
8/22/05